Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services

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Extensions of country programmes in the Arab States region

Note by the Executive Director

Summary

The present note contains information on the one-year extension of the country programme for Tunisia.

In accordance with established procedures, the Executive Director approves the first one-year extension of a country programme, while requests for second one-year extensions or requests for two-year extensions are submitted to the Executive Board for approval.

The Executive Board may wish to take note of the one-year country programme extension for Tunisia, as indicated in the attached table.

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One-year country programme extensions approved by the Executive Director

Country	Original Programme period	Years proposed for extension	Explanation		
			United Nations Harmonization	In-country political development	Implementation and/or other issues
Tunisia	2007-2011	2012	Initially, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), 2012-2016, was conceived to ensure alignment with the national programming cycle, and in the context of the national economic and social development plan, 2012-2016, which was aligned with the presidential plan, 2009-2014. Following recent political developments in Tunisia, the context in which the common country assessment was developed is no longer valid. Many figures related to the economic and social situation are likely to be reviewed and modified, especially those regarding unemployment rates and economic growth. New challenges have emerged and new priorities may be identified. In this context, the United Nations country team has decided to request the postponement of the common country assessment and the UNDAF by one year. The Transitional Government has approved this request. To ensure alignment with these developments, and to guarantee complementarity with the other programmes of United Nations organizations, UNFPA has decided to extend its country programme by one year, in order to provide an opportunity to update and reorient the country programme to the current situation of Tunisia.	Tunisia is experiencing a changing political and democratic environment. The events of January 2011 in Tunisia led to the departure of the President and the dissolution of the Government. An interim Government was appointed to manage the daily affairs of the country. The presidential elections are expected to be held in six months. The democratic process will likely lead to the emergence of new actors, such as civil society organizations, in the political, economic and social arenas. The forums for such a consultative process will be critical to ensuring the participation and involvement of various stakeholders. New orientations and priorities are expected to emerge, within which the United Nations will need to reposition itself for greater relevance and impact in this middle-income country.	The one-year extension of the country programme seeks to ensure: (a) an increase in the availability of basic reproductive health services to the entire population, particularly the most vulnerable groups; and (b) that the next country programme will be aligned to the national priorities that will emerge in 2011. The programme will take advantage of the democratic transition to: (a) advocate the greater participation of youth and women in this process; (b) advocate an enabling environment to reduce disparities among population groups and promote more equity; (c) open the debate for health-system reform to strengthen the linkages with sexual and reproductive health, particularly for adolescents and youth; and (d) better position UNFPA within the United Nations system and among national partners in preparing for a new UNFPA country programme for 2013-2017.